



# Recognizing Child Abuse

Presenter's  
Guide



## INTRODUCTION

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This Presenter's Guide provides information to help you get the most out of *Recognizing Child Abuse*. The contents of this guide will allow you to prepare the professionals with whom you are working before using the program and to present follow-up activities to reinforce the program's key learning points.

*Recognizing Child Abuse* details for the viewer the signs and symptoms of various forms of abuse to which children, unfortunately, can be subjected. By viewing this program teachers and caregivers are alerted to the specific physical, emotional, and behavioral indicators of abuse and are provided with the resources to take the next step in responding effectively. The program clarifies the different forms abuse can take, the serious and extremely negative effects it can have on the victim, and what concerned adults can and should do to address the abuse. Some viewers may assume that all child abuse is physical; this film demonstrates that other types of mistreatment, such as neglect and emotional abuse, can prove equally as damaging and painful. After watching *Recognizing Child Abuse*, viewers are prepared to describe various types of child abuse, recognize the signs and effects of abuse as demonstrated by both parents and children, and take steps to ensure the abuse is addressed and ended.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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After viewing the program, viewers will be able to:

- Describe different types of child abuse
- Identify general signs of child abuse displayed by both children and caregivers
- Recognize the short-term and long-term effects of physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional maltreatment
- Describe and take the appropriate response to suspected child abuse

## NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

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### Child Welfare Information Gateway

Primary prevention activities are directed at the general population and attempt to stop maltreatment before it occurs. All members of the community have access to and may benefit from these services. Primary prevention activities with a universal focus seek to raise the awareness of the general public, service providers, and decision-makers about the scope and problems associated with child maltreatment. Universal approaches to primary prevention might include public service announcements that encourage positive parenting and parent education programs and support groups that focus on child development and age-appropriate expectations, and the roles and responsibilities of parenting

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau*

### National Health Education

This program correlates with *National Health Education Standards: Achieving Health Literacy* from the American School Health Association. The content has been aligned with the following educational standards and benchmarks from this organization:

- Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

*This represents the work of the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards. Copies of "National Health Education Standards: Achieving Health Literacy" can be obtained through the American School Health Association, Association for the Advancement of Health Education, or the American Cancer Society. Reprinted with permission.*

### **Life Work**

This program correlates with *What Work Requires of Schools* from the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). The content has been aligned with the following educational standards and benchmarks from this organization:

- Interpersonal: Exercises Leadership: Communicates thoughts, feelings, and ideas to justify a position, encourages, persuades, convinces, or otherwise motivates an individual or groups, including responsibly challenging existing procedures, policies, or authority.

*Educational Standards from "What Work Requires of Schools" reprinted with permission.*

### **English Language Arts Standards**

The activities in this Presenter's Guide were created in compliance with the following standards from *National Standards for the English Language Arts* from the National Council of Teachers of English:

- Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
- Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
- Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g. for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

*"Standards for the English Language Arts," by the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. Copyright 1996 by the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. Reprinted with permission.*

### **Technology Standards**

The activities in this Presenter's Guide were created in compliance with the following National Education Technology Standard from the National Education Technology Standards Project:

- Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.

*"The National Education Technology Standards" reprinted with permission from the International Society for Technology Education.*

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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*Recognizing Child Abuse* features direct, unflinching information about child abuse: its variations, its signs, its consequences, and the response needed to address it in specific situations. By watching the film, viewers develop knowledge and skills in differentiating between the forms of child abuse, recognizing the signs and indicators of each of these forms, understanding the behavioral, physical, and psychological impact abuse has on the victim, and responding to the abuse effectively and directly. Many teachers and caretakers are already aware of the significance and prevalence of child abuse; this program provides them with concrete information to utilize in recognizing and helping to end it. This program stresses to its audience just how painful, frightening, and harmful all types of child abuse are, and inspires viewers to make a difference by acknowledging signs and symptoms and speaking up. After viewing this program, viewers will have more confidence in their ability to recognize all types of abuse and to make strides towards addressing any abuse affecting the children in their lives.

*Recognizing Child Abuse* uses an extended role-play scenario, combined with real-life stories and input, to effectively emphasize the reality and seriousness of child abuse. Viewers are provided with a great deal of detailed and useful information they might use in reacting to potential abuse situations in their own workplaces and other settings. Facts and statistics are utilized to highlight the significance of the impact of child abuse; viewers are also given concrete ways to react and respond appropriately to any abuse scenarios they might face. This film is powerful as well as useful—it brings the issue to life and presents a meaningful way to address it.

After viewing this program, the audience will have the information necessary to identify different types of child abuse and neglect, recognize the signs and symptoms of each, and take the appropriate steps to begin to remedy the abusive situation. This film reviews specific, practical information with viewers: general statistics describing child abuse in this country, the precise indicators of various forms of abuse, and effective methods of responding. Equally as important, this program instills in its audience a clear understanding of the devastating effects of child abuse and the importance of reacting to even suspicions of it promptly and decisively. The film's role-play of a realistic scenario assists viewers in developing a clear understanding of both the physical and behavioral signs of abuse to which they should be alert, and the words and mannerisms they might utilize in responding to positive effect. After viewing *Recognizing Child Abuse*, the audience will possess professional information and stronger, honed judgment skills—knowledge that will give them the confidence to take an assertive stand against child abuse in their educational and care-giving communities. Most importantly, this film takes a stand against the devastation of child abuse, raising awareness and providing the skills needed to make a difference.

## MAIN TOPICS

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### Topic 1: Abuse and Neglect

In this section, the film introduces viewers to general information about the impact of child abuse, as well as setting up the role-play scenario that carries throughout the film. Viewers also meet an education professional who describes a personal experience with reporting child abuse. In addition, the topics addressed by the other sections of the film are presented.

## **Topic 2: The Reality of Child Abuse**

In this section, the film conveys specific definitions, information, and statistics that illustrate the reality and severity of child abuse and neglect. The role-play continues, with the teacher observing abuse and discussing what to do about it.

## **Topic 3: The Results of Child Abuse**

Here, the devastating effects of child abuse and neglect are explored, with physical, psychological, and societal results examined. With physical effects such as heart, lung, and liver disease; psychological effects such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and suicide attempts; and societal effects such as criminal behavior, drug and alcohol abuse, and continuation of the abuse cycle, child abuse and neglect is not something to be taken lightly or ignored.

## **Topic 4: The Warning Signs of Child Abuse**

Through continuing the role-play scenario with the teacher noticing additional signs of abuse, the viewer is introduced to the warning signs of child abuse and neglect. Specific actions, behaviors, and situations are presented as possible warning signs—signs that can be observed in both abused children and abusive parents. The signs are detailed and frightening, and extremely helpful for judging potentially abusive situations.

## **Topic 5: Reporting Child Abuse**

The role-play comes to a conclusion with the teacher approaching the school principal about reporting the abuse she has observed. Viewers are given specific actions to take to report abuse themselves, including a national hotline. In addition, this section describes how teachers and other professionals should speak and interact with suspected victims of child abuse, explaining some effective tactics for successfully reaching and helping the child.

## **FAST FACTS**

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- Approximately three to five children die every day from child abuse and neglect. These numbers reflect just the statistics in the United States.
- Child abuse includes “any act that endangers or impairs a child’s physical or emotional health and development.”
- In 2003, over 900,000 children suffered some form of abuse or neglect.
- In that same year, approximately 1,500 children, a majority under the age of four, died as a result of child abuse.
- Child abuse and neglect can have long-term physical effects, including sexually transmitted diseases, heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, fractures, and liver disease.
- Psychiatric disorders (such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders) are common among young adults who suffered from child abuse or neglect.
- Many child abuse victims will become abusive parents themselves.
- Signs indicating child abuse are detectable not only in the victim—abusive parents can act in ways that indicate their abuse, such as showing little concern for their child or blaming the child for problems at home or in school.

- Child neglect is very damaging as well. Signs of child neglect include begging or stealing money or food, being consistently dirty and having a strong body odor, lacking weather-appropriate clothing, and abusing alcohol or drugs.
- An excellent reporting resource is Childhelp USA, National Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-4-A-Child).

## VOCABULARY TERMS

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**child abuse:** Any act that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and development; includes any damage done to a child which cannot be reasonably explained and which is often represented by an injury or series of injuries appearing to be non-accidental in nature.

**educational neglect:** Not providing a child with access to school or needed special education, or allowing excessive absences from education.

**general parental signs:** Signs indicating child abuse or neglect, including lack of concern for child, denial of problems, blame placed on child, request for harsh discipline from others, view of child as worthless, and looking to child for care.

**long term effects of child abuse:** Can include sexually transmitted diseases, heart, lung, and liver disease, cancer, fractures, impaired brain development, serious immune system damage, and psychological and societal consequences.

**neglect:** Failing to provide for the basic needs of a child.

**physical abuse:** The inflicting of a non-accidental physical injury upon a child; could include burning, hitting, punching, shaking, or kicking.

**psychological consequences:** Nonphysical results of child abuse which can include depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and suicide attempts.

**psychological neglect:** Failing to provide love or emotional support; constant inattention to the child; exposing the child to drugs or alcohol; exposing the child to spousal abuse.

**psychological/emotional maltreatment:** The act of conveying to children that they are worthless, flawed, unlovable, and unwanted.

**sexual abuse:** Inappropriate sexual behavior with a child imposed by an adolescent or adult.

**the cycle:** Continuation of child abuse in which abused children grow up to be abusive parents themselves. It is estimated that one-third of abused children will become abusive parents.

## **PRE-PROGRAM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

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1. Have you ever been in a situation where you suspected child abuse? What were the signs? How did you react?
2. What do you think are some of the consequences of child abuse?
3. What are some recent stories you've heard in the news about child abuse and neglect? How did you react to these stories?
4. Does your school or workplace have a specific policy in place for reporting suspected child abuse? What is it?
5. If you suspected one of your students was being abused, what would you do? What might you do if you suspected one of your neighbors' children was being abused? What might you do if you suspected one of your own children's friends was being abused?
6. What are the effects of child abuse on the community and on society?
7. Why might a child not want to tell anyone about being abused? What might you say or do to encourage a child to speak with you?
8. Have you ever spoken about child abuse with your students? Why or why not? If yes, what did you discuss?

## **POST-PROGRAM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

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1. Did you learn anything from this film that surprised you or that you weren't expecting to learn? What was it?
2. Did the role-play scenario in the film seem like the type of situation you might encounter with a student? Why or why not?
3. Why can it be challenging to know when to address or report child abuse? What can you do to overcome that reaction?
4. If you suspected a child you knew was being abused, what would you do? Did any aspect of your response change after viewing this program?
5. How could you and your colleagues raise awareness about child abuse? How might your actions make a difference in your local community?
6. What are some of the important tips, ideas, and other information you learned (or were reminded of) through this program?
7. What are the different forms of child abuse and neglect? What are the signs that indicate these different forms?
8. How might an abused child act or look? How might an abusive parent act or look?

## **ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS/PROFESSIONALS**

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1. With input from your principal, counseling staff, and other appropriate professionals, compile data and details for an information sheet regarding the appropriate procedure for reporting child abuse at your school. Distribute this information sheets to all professionals at your school and post in prominent locations.
2. Invite a guest speaker from the local police station or Child Protective Services office to address the faculty and staff at your school. This speaker could address statistics and information about abuse in your community and also ways in which reporting suspected child abuse makes an important difference.
3. Hold a fund- or awareness-raising event at your school or in your community to spotlight the problem of child abuse. Students could get involved by creating posters, inviting friends and family, or helping to determine the recipient(s) of any funds raised. The event might be cosponsored by a local organization working to combat child abuse as well.
4. Together with the principal, counseling staff, and other appropriate school professionals, develop a presentation on child abuse to be delivered to parents and guardians. You should also create and distribute handouts with helpful tips and useful contact information. If there are local resources for parents who struggle with abuse and neglect issues, invite their representatives to be a part of the presentation as well.
5. With your colleagues, develop and practice appropriate conversation scripts for utilization in addressing a child about suspected abuse. Draw on the suggested language and phrasing presented in the film, and include scripts that are useful for different types of student reactions to the conversation. Practice until the conversations are natural and effective.

## **ADDITIONAL TOPICS, IDEAS, AND QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

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1. Are there any resources in your local community (shelters, hotlines, free counseling, etc.) that serve abuse victims or parents struggling with avoiding abuse? What would it take to create or expand these types of resources? What types of outlets or services would best serve your community?
2. What can be done to break the cycle of abuse victims becoming abusive parents themselves? Consider holding a symposium or conference on this topic, or exploring it further through research. Can your school/school system provide any resources that would help to break this cycle?
3. Compile for your school library or counseling office a small collection of books about child abuse and how to address and prevent it. You might want to consider including books and materials that speak directly to students as well, and making these available to the entire school community.
4. Get parents involved in any awareness campaigns or information sessions you conduct. Encourage parental input about how to reach out to those parents and guardians who might struggle with abuse and neglect. Are there certain life situations or settings that might contribute to abuse and neglect? What might these be, and how could the community address them?

5. Who advocates for abused children? Who provides the resources for working with them and preventing child abuse in the first place? Compile research on national and local groups and organizations that are committed to helping victims of abuse and stopping child abuse altogether. These groups and organizations could be excellent resources for planning and programming in your own community,

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

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### **Web Sites**

#### **Child Welfare Information Gateway**

[www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

#### **Prevent Child Abuse America (PCAA)**

<http://preventchildabuse.org>

#### **American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC)**

[www.apsac.org](http://www.apsac.org)

#### **Childhelp USA**

[www.childhelpusa.org](http://www.childhelpusa.org)

#### **Child Abuse Prevention Network**

<http://child-abuse.com/capn.shtml>

#### **Child Molestation Research and Prevention Institute**

[www.childmolestationprevention.org](http://www.childmolestationprevention.org)

#### **Association for Sexual Abuse Prevention (ASAP)**

[www.nationalcac.org/professionals/organizations/asap.html](http://www.nationalcac.org/professionals/organizations/asap.html)

### **Books**

#### **Child Abuse and Neglect: The School's Response**

By Connie Burrows Horton and Tracy K. Cruise

ISBN: 1572306734

The Guilford Press, 2001

#### **APSAC Handbook on Child Maltreatment**

By John E. B. Myers, Lucy Berliner, John Briere, C. Terry Hendrix, Theresa A. Reid, Carole A. Jenny

ISBN: 0761919929

Sage Publications, Inc.; 2nd edition, 2002

#### **A Parent's & Teacher's Handbook on Identifying and Preventing Child Abuse**

By James A. Monteleone

ISBN: 1878060279

G. W. Medical Publishing, Inc.; 1st edition, 1998

## **Additional Resources at [www.filmsmediagroup.com](http://www.filmsmediagroup.com)**

*Available from Films Media Group • [www.filmsmediagroup.com](http://www.filmsmediagroup.com) • 1-800-257-5126*

### **Hope Beyond the Breaking Point: No Child Ever Deserves to Be Abused**

- VHS/DVD-R/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online (search on 34665)
- Closed captioned
- Includes viewable/printable teacher's guide
- Correlates to national standards
- Order #34665

Inspired by “simulated baby” counseling programs for teenage students, this video uses a classroom setting and dramatizations to teach personal responsibility and self-awareness in parenting and childcare. It helps young people recognize various forms of abusive behavior, including physical injury, sexual abuse, emotional humiliation, neglect of parental duties, and imminent risk, or knowingly placing a child in danger. With a teacher's guide full of useful tools—lesson plans, Q & A cards, abuse reporting guidelines, a template for informational letters to parents, and more—*Hope Beyond* is an indispensable resource. (19 minutes) © 2005.

### **Child Abuse: We Can All Work Against It**

- VHS/DVD-R/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online (search on 33988)
- Closed captioned
- Order #33988

This video speaks directly to adults and children with two helpful segments on confronting child abuse. The first emphasizes that adults in supervisory roles have clear responsibilities, not only to overcome fears of reprisal and report suspected abuse, but also to create a safe environment in which children can freely express problems. The reassuring second segment counsels children that they have a right to be safe and protected, and suggests that they identify trustworthy adults to approach if needed. Both segments clearly illustrate the need for communication and the idea that child protection must be a shared goal. (33 minutes) © 2004.

### **Broken Child: Case Studies of Child Abuse**

- VHS/DVD-R
- Correlates to national standards
- Order #11491

Every year in the U.S., approximately one in 25 children is reported as a victim of prenatal substance abuse, criminal neglect, or physical or emotional violence. Filmed on location in Baltimore, Atlanta, Houston, and Seattle, this cautionary program narrated by Susan Sarandon examines the cycle of child abuse. Case studies include children with developmental difficulties caused by maternal drug addiction, PTSD brought on by scenes of extreme violence in the home, and life-threatening injuries from beatings. An HBO Production. (61 minutes) © 2000.

### **Eternal Scars: Physical and Psychological Child Abuse**

- VHS/DVD-R/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online (search on 11028)
- Correlates to national standards
- Order #11028

Sarcastic and rude statements to children can leave as deep a wound as a cigarette burn or welts from a belt. This important program looks at both physical and emotional child abuse, and the lifetime effects they may have on children. We touch on what you can do if you recognize abuse of someone you know. A Meridian Production. (23 minutes) © 1996.

### **Child Abuse: Chain of Pain**

- VHS/DVD-R/Digital On-Demand
- [Preview clip online \(search on 24995\)](#)
- **Correlates to national standards**
- **Order #24995**

Overviews the five basic categories of child abuse and their effects on children. The video also examines the reasons adults abuse children, and describes ways to stop current abuse and prevent future abuse. Also stressed are means of obtaining help for victims. A Meridian Production. (14 minutes) © 1990.

### **Child Abuse**

- VHS/DVD-R
- **Order #1449**

This program deals with the delicate subject of sexually and physically abused children. A therapist who deals with sex offenders describes the common characteristics of offenders; a clinical social worker trained to talk with sexually abused children discusses the effects of abuse on the child and explains how she gets children to re-create what has happened to them by using anatomically correct dolls. The program offers tips on selecting a daycare center. A specialist provides examples of disciplinary problems and offers clues to help identify a physically abused child. (19 minutes)

**[www.meridianeducation.com](http://www.meridianeducation.com)**

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